

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 24 and 29 have been amended. Claims 16-18 and 32 have been cancelled. Claims 24 and 26-31 are pending in the application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 112

Claim 32 was rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 32 has been cancelled.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 102 and 103

Claims 24, 26 and 32 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Kikuchi (JP 58-17028) (hereinafter "Kikuchi").

Claims 16-18, 24 and 26-31 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicant's admitted prior art (hereinafter "APA") in view of Stemmler (US 4,768,042) (hereinafter "Stemmler").

Claims 16-18

Claims 16-18 have been cancelled.

Claims 24 and 26-32

Amended claim 24 recites: "...the second portion of the knock-up plate is an open portion so that the movement of the second finger device does not interfere with the knock-up plate." Support for this amendment may be found in at least claim 32 and paragraphs [0061] and [0062] of the specification. In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Kikuchi, specifically Figure 2, to disclose this feature of claim 24. However, in contrast to claim 24, in Kikuchi the auxiliary sheet loading plates 24, 24a are arranged so that they cover the notches 1a, 1b of the main loading plate 1, and are forcibly energized by a spring 25 so that they are spread forcibly to engage with the width position limiting plates 6, 6a. This feature of Kikuchi provides that when the width position limiting plates 6, 6a are slid in conformity with paper sheets, the auxiliary loading plates 24, 24a are moved together with the width position limiting plates 6, 6a at all times. See Kikuchi, Abstract. Accordingly, since the notches 1a, 1b of the main loading plate 1 are always covered,

Kikuchi does not discuss the feature of claim 24 where the second portion of the knock-up plate is an open portion so that the movement of the second finger device does not interfere with the knock-up plate.

Claims 26-31 are dependent on claim 24 and are therefore believed to allowable for the foregoing reasons.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: June 21, 2007

By: / Gregory W. Harper /
Gregory W. Harper
Registration No. 55,248

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Seventh Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501